



# ADJC TODAY

*The mission of the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections is to enhance public protection by changing the delinquent thinking and behaviors of juvenile offenders committed to the Department.*

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**JANET NAPOLITANO, GOVERNOR**

**DAVID A. GASPAR, DIRECTOR**

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January 2003

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

### *Perseverance: Keeping Focused On The Task At Hand*



As you know, in November the Legislature met in Special Session. The result was a \$220 million reduction in state spending for the current fiscal year. The cuts were comprised of reductions in state agency general expenses and elimination of more than 1,700 jobs, most of them vacant positions.

Governor Hull's budget recommended a 5% or \$3.2 million cut for the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC). After public testimony by Director Gaspar before the Senate Appropriations Committee, the Legislature exempted ADJC from this round of budget cuts based on public safety considerations. While we were spared the \$3.2 million cut, there was a \$190,000 reduction in overall expenses.

Looking at the year ahead, even deeper spending reductions are expected. The new Governor and Legislature face the task of closing another gap of about \$250 million for the current fiscal year, plus a projected \$1 billion deficit in FY2003-04 when the Legislature reconvenes January 13th. While no one knows the exact impact of those additional reductions, they are likely to affect every aspect of state spending.

We will continue to work with the new Governor and the Legislature as they, and we, are called to make the tough decisions that lie ahead.

In the meantime, let us all maintain our focus on the mission and values that we have consistently labored toward: to enhance public protection by changing the delinquent thinking and behaviors of juvenile offenders committed to the Department.

In the end, that is how we will ultimately be judged, and rightly so. É

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## ***New ADJC Translator Brings Resources To Accomplish ADJC Goals***

Director David A. Gaspar announced in December that he is establishing a new initiative seeking to reduce the disproportionate treatment that minority youth often encounter within the juvenile justice system. Because language barriers are often a contributing factor to that treatment, the Director decided to hire Taty Vilaplana as a full-time Spanish-language translator for the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC).

Ms. Vilaplana knows what it's like to come to an English-speaking nation after spending her life in a country where everyone speaks Spanish, and ADJC's commitment to changing delinquent thinking is one reason why she says she enjoys her new job.

"I wanted to work for an agency that is committed to serving groups of people who are under-served, and that is why I am glad to join this Department," said Ms. Vilaplana, who joined ADJC on October 1 after working for the Arizona Prevention Resource Center for more than three years.

***Ms. Vilaplana is working to develop a list of literally hundreds of ADJC documents that need to be converted into Spanish.***

Ms. Vilaplana brings many years of experience to the task of converting complex thoughts and terms from one language into another. She grew up in Costa Rica and had access to an academic environment where speaking another language and experiencing another culture were extremely important. She started translating early in her career. During her years at the University of Costa Rica as an English major, she also worked at the Section English for Other Majors from the School of Modern Languages.

She was honored with a prestigious Fulbright scholarship granted by the U.S. government to pursue graduate studies and graduated with an M.A. in English Literature, with minors in Education/Translation, from Indiana University-Bloomington. She also performed graduate studies in translation at the prestigious Monterey Institute for International Studies in Monterey, California.

"Often it takes hours, maybe even days, of looking in reference books and searching the Internet for the proper word or phrase," said Ms. Vilaplana. "Sometimes, when you're translating technical terminology, it really takes a lot of research to develop a correct translation."

Ms. Vilaplana is working with the Department's Minority Over-representation Committee (MOR) to develop a list of literally hundreds of ADJC documents written in English that need to be converted into appropriate Spanish documents to better serve the youth in our care and their families.

While she continues to study ADJC and its culture, she has helped Esteban "E.V" Veloz, the Department's Diversity Administrator, to develop translations of Spanish-language newspapers articles discussing efforts to reduce the numbers of Hispanic youth who enter the juvenile justice system. "Ms. Vilaplana's work will be a crucial part of the Department's new initiative to address minority over representation," said Mr. Veloz.

Thus far, she has also developed Spanish versions of an exit interview administered to ADJC youth in conjunction with the Performance-based Standards (PbS) Project, letters to parents announcing visitation schedules and guidelines for Thanksgiving and Christmas for Black Canyon School, and a Christmas letter to parents and a list of gifts that are allowed to be given to juveniles at the Adobe Mountain secure facility.

Ms. Vilaplana also plans to attend a series of Superintendent Review Boards in an effort to sharpen her interpreting skills, and to understand the technical terminology of ADJC sufficiently to provide interpretation to Spanish-speaking parents. É

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## ***ADJC Staff And Volunteers Organize Events To Brighten Holidays For Incarcerated Youth***

It was a busy holiday season for the staff and volunteers of the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC). ADJC staff, as they do every year, worked with volunteers to coordinate a wide range of events that brought friends, small gifts, and holiday treats to youth who were incarcerated during the period between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Several events were targeted for youth who do not receive regular visitations, while other events focused on the annual collections of small items that were placed in gift bags and distributed to all youth. The following is a summary of some of the holiday events that were organized at each facility:

**Adobe Mountain School (AMS):** Chaplain Todd Peat and the rest of the AMS religious staff organized festivities with holiday trees in the housing units and other Adobe Mountain buildings. The annual Christmas Inside Out event was a big hit. Volunteers came to each housing unit and helped prepare small arts and craft gifts that were wrapped and delivered to families of the incarcerated youth.

Starting on December 22, staff distributed gift bags containing items donated by a number of outside groups - and staff - using a list of items that were approved by security. These included socks, writing paper, certain books and some treats.

**Black Canyon School (BCS):** The girls incarcerated at Black Canyon experienced several holiday events including an opportunity to decorate holiday trees and their housing units, and parties that were scheduled in the classrooms and at the housing units. There was a contest in which prizes were awarded for holiday decorations. Gifts for the youth were distributed on December 24, and a special holiday meal was served on Christmas Day.

**Catalina Mountain School (CMS):** Youth at the Tucson-area facility also received gift bags collected by community churches and faith-based organizations, along with a musical group, the Gatekeepers, who augmented their usual work at Catalina Mountain by organizing a Christmas Caroling event and by donating bags of fudge for each youth. Some youth also volunteered to develop a theatrical presentation reenacting the Manger Scene at the Catalina Mountain chapel.

In addition, Bill Rowe at Catalina Mountain organized the 5<sup>th</sup> annual visit by the employees of Honeywell, who come to Catalina each year during the holidays to provide holiday activities for youth who do not receive visitors.

**Encanto:** Triumph youth participated in the Christmas Inside Out program in which volunteers helped the youth complete an arts project that was gift-wrapped and delivered to their families. They also put up a holiday tree, decorated their units, and enjoyed a holiday party, a special meal and other events, including skits and gifts, organized by staff and volunteers.

**Eagle Point/Sunrise Mountain:** Youth at these facilities prepared gift items that were donated to Phoenix Children's Hospital. They also received gifts in the form of holiday bags that were organized by the chaplain and delivered by a staff member dressed as "Santa," and their holiday meals were augmented by treats that were prepared by youth with the help of staff. É

***Each ADJC institution  
organized a full schedule of  
holiday events for youth.***

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## ***ADJC Youth Earns Straight 'A's And A \$25,000 Scholarship***

Benjamin David has won a \$25,000 scholarship. The 21-year-old Apache Junction resident was awarded the scholarship by a group that includes a national organization, Phi Theta Kappa, an international honors society for two-year colleges, along with the publication *USA Today* and the American Association of Community Colleges.

***With the help of a partnership between ADJC and the Department of Economic Security, Mr. David has excelled as a student.***

The scholarship was awarded in honor of David's straight 'A' performance in earning 93 credits and four separate Associate Degrees from Central Arizona College in business, science, arts, and general studies as well as his involvement in student government.

He plans to apply to Stanford, Penn, Yale, Cornell and Northwestern universities, as well as Arizona State University (ASU). Since the scholarship can only be used for schools within Arizona, he can only accept the funds if he attends ASU. His hope is that his academic performance and his ability to overcome a trouble-filled adolescence, will help him win a scholarship from a prestigious university.

"He's really got his heart set on an Ivy League school," said Tom Carr, a Vocational-Rehabilitation specialist working out of Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections' (ADJC) Mesa Community Resource Center. "I would have to say that this young man is probably our No. 1 student. We're all very proud of Ben for what he's accomplished."

All of this is a long way from his days as a troubled youth who collected 25 separate referrals prior to being sent to ADJC in May 1998. While the youth continued to struggle for a while under the Department's supervision, he eventually earned his release from ADJC supervision.

And then, with the help of the Voc-Rehab program, a partnership between ADJC and the Arizona Department of Economic Security, Mr. David has attended Central Arizona College where he has excelled both as a student and as an active participant in campus life.

His first goal was to complete his General Equivalency Diploma (GED). His scores were high enough to qualify him for financial aid from Grand Canyon. He then became totally immersed in campus life, which included terms as Treasurer and Student Body Representative on the college student council, work as a tutor, and several other paying positions that helped him pay for room, board and tuition.

He even earned special awards for his skills as a tutor in 11 separate subjects.

For Mr. Benjamin, all his awards, academic success, and student honors are nothing more than a good start.

"I'm happy with what I've accomplished so far, but my goal is to earn a degree in economics from a highly regarded university, and then I want to attend one of the top law schools," he said. "I want to be the best."

Some would say he already is. É

*ADJC Today* is the employee newsletter of the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections. Unless noted otherwise, articles are written by Communications Division staff. For comments or input, please contact the Communications Office at (602) 542-4497. This document is available in an alternative format upon request.